

unhesitatingly answers in the negative. Sovereignty over the conscience belongs to God alone. This sovereignty princes, calling themselves Christians, have usurped, and deem those who refuse to recognise this usurpation rebels. In this sense Christ and the apostles were rebels, and the flatterers of kings still teach them to overlook the distinction between God and Caesar. But what saith Scripture? Scripture teaches that kings derive their authority from God, are His delegates or lieutenants, and that their power is limited by Him. He alone is absolute sovereign, and has never consented to share His absolute sovereignty with any mortal. Kings are His vassals, not the sharers of His sovereign power, and, as vassals, are invested with their jurisdiction on certain conditions. They are kings by covenant or contract, and this covenant or contract is, according to Scripture, which our author quotes incessantly, twofold : first, between God and the king and the people; secondly, between the people and the king. By the first, to which he limits consideration in the meantime, the people and the king undertake to obey and serve God, and are subject to punishment in case of contravention, as when the people made a covenant with Baal, and Saul declined from his obligations to serve Him. Even pagan kings have not escaped punishment for usurping the sovereign power reserved by God to Himself. And what holds of Jewish and even of pagan kings, holds of Christian princes who command what is contrary to God's law. They are on the same footing with rebellious vassals, and if so, who so mad as to deny that we should obey the sovereign Lord rather than the rebellious vassal? All who refuse this obedience are rebels, as much rebels as those who join a vassal in insurrection against his overlord.

Question two : May subjects resist a king who commands what is contrary to the law of God, and if so, by whom, how, and to what extent is resistance lawful ? Once more, what saith Scripture ? The covenant or contract is, he again insists, between God, the king, and the people. The people was a party to the transaction, it had authority to promise and keep promise ; if not, the transaction would not have been a contract Its participation, on the other hand, served to strengthen the contract, just as two or more warranters afford more security